

Case Number:	CM14-0212514		
Date Assigned:	01/02/2015	Date of Injury:	08/27/2013
Decision Date:	02/23/2015	UR Denial Date:	12/05/2014
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	12/18/2014

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to an expert reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. He/she has been in active clinical practice for more than five years and is currently working at least 24 hours a week in active practice. The expert reviewer was selected based on his/her clinical experience, education, background, and expertise in the same or similar specialties that evaluate and/or treat the medical condition and disputed items/Service. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

The Expert Reviewer has the following credentials:

State(s) of Licensure: California, Washington

Certification(s)/Specialty: Physical Medicine & Rehabn, Pain Management

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

The injured worker is a 28-year-old male who reported an injury on 08/27/2013. The mechanism of injury reportedly occurred when he bent over to pick up an item off the floor and he felt his back lock up with increased pain. On 11/24/2014, the injured worker was seen for followup evaluation. He had significant improvement of an epidural steroid injection in 07/2014. On 11/21/2014, he bent over to pick an item up off the floor and felt his back lock up with increased pain. The mechanism of injury was unknown. The injured worker complained of worsening low back pain radiating into the right buttocks. He rated the pain a 7/10 on a VAS with medications, increasing to an 8/10 to 9/10 on a VAS without medications. His current medications include Celebrex 200 mg and ibuprofen 800 mg. A prescription was given for Medrol 4 mg Dosepak. Upon examination, the injured worker walked with a mildly antalgic gait pattern. There is palpable tenderness and spasms in the right paravertebral musculature and upper right buttock. There was mildly decreased sensation over the right L3 dermatomal distribution. Flexion was 4/5 bilaterally. Straight leg raise was positive at 80 degrees for back pain. Diagnostic studies included an MRI of the lumbar spine on 12/23/2014. He was diagnosed with right L4-5 disc degeneration, right L4-5 disc displacement, and right lower extremity radiculopathy. The injured worker was instructed to ice and heat as tolerated and followup in 4 weeks for re-evaluation. The Request for Authorization was not provided. A Medrol Dosepak was given in an attempt to tame down t e flareup and return his symptoms to baseline.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

The Final Determination was based on decisions for the disputed items/services set forth below:

Medrol 4mg dose pak #1: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: The Claims Administrator did not base their decision on the MTUS. Decision based on Non-MTUS Citation Official Disability Guidelines (ODG)-TWC Low Back

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS ACOEM Chapter 12 Low Back Complaints Page(s): 307.

Decision rationale: The request for Medrol 4 mg Dosepak #1 is not supported. The California MTUS does not address. The ACOEM states oral corticosteroids are not recommended for chronic pain, except for Polymyalgia rheumatica (PMR). There is no data on the efficacy and safety of systemic corticosteroids in chronic pain, so given their serious adverse effects, they should be avoided. The injured worker complained of worsening low back pain that radiated into the right buttock. However, there was a lack of documentation the injured worker was unresponsive to typical oral pain medications. There is no clear clinical evidence to support the efficacy and safety of oral corticosteroids. As such, the request for Medrol 4 mg Dosepak #1 is not medically necessary.